

Message Text

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73

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

DIWY-01 CU-02 OES-03 IO-10 EB-07 AID-05 /084 W

----- 019485

R 030026Z JUL 75

FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8652

INFO ALL CONSULATES IN MEXICO

C O N F I D E N T I A L MEXICO 5860

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, MX

SUBJ: MONTHLY POLITICAL HIGHLIGHTS - JUNE 1975

1. SUMMARY: WCIWY LOOMED LARGE IN JUNE'S EVENTS, THE GOM SURVIVING AN ALMOST UNMANAGEABLE SITUATION WITHOUT ANY OF ITS WORST FEARS (VIOLENCE) OCCURRING. FOREIGN VISITORS (CEAUSESCU, PALME, PLUS WCIWY VIPS) CONTINUED TO COME AND PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA, WHOSE CANDIDACY FOR UN SECRERARY GENERALSHIP SURFACED IN JUNE, ANNOUNCED HE WILL MAKE TRIP ABROAD IN JULY TO, INTER ALIA, SEVERAL COUNTRIES (ALGERIA, IRAN, EGYPT, INDIA) PROMINENT AMONG EMERGING MIDDLE POWERS. DOMESTICALLY, EVENTS CONTINUED TO HEED ECHEVERRIA'S MAY COMMAND TO STOP PREMATURE PRESIDENTIAL SUCCESSION ACTIVITY. BIGGEST NEWS WAS A TEACHERS STRIKE AT THE NATIONAL UNIVRSITY, SETTLED WITHOUT VIOLENCE AND IN WAY MORE FAVORABLE TO UNIVERSITY MANAGEMENT THAN TO STRIKING PROFESSORS. ON THE PERIPHERY, THE OPPOSITION PAN'S INTERNAL DIFFICULTIES WORSENER, RAISING QUESTIONS ABOUT ITS ABILITY TO MAINTAIN ITS RECENTLY (LAST SIX YEARS) DEVELOPED STRENGTH IN MEXICO'S URBAN AREAS. END SUMMARY.

2. MEXICO HOSTS WORLD CONFERENCE OF INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S YEAR. IN ITS DETERMINATION TO HOST EVERY AVAILABLE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE AND THEREBY ENHANCE ITS THIRD WORLD LEADERSHIP IMAGE, MEXICO ALMOST BIT OFF MORE THAN IT COULD

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CHEW WITH UN-SPONSORED WORLD CONFERENCE OF INTERNATIONAL

WOMEN'S YEAR (WCIWY). TWO-WEEK CONFERENCE, WHICH BEGAN JUNE 19 WITH 1500 OFFICIAL DELEGATES FROM SOME 120 COUNTRIES AND FEATURED IMPRESSIVE LIST OF VIP WOMEN, STRAINED GOM SUPPORT FACILITIES TO BREAKING POINT AND INDEED PROVED MUCH MORE THAN GOM COULD STAGE-MANAGE POLITICALLY. NONETHELESS, THANKS TO BROADENING CONSENSUS AMONG LDC'S, MEXICO GOT IN ITS LICK ON CERDS AS "FRAMEWORK FOR NEW INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC ORDER" WHICH MAJORITY DECLARED WAS ESSENTIAL PREREQUISITE TO ACHIEVEMENT OF WOMEN'S EQUALITY AND OPPORTUNITY. CONFERENCE WAS MARKED BY INJECTION OF OTHER ESSENTIALLY IRRELEVANT POLITICAL ISSUES AS WELL: PANAMA CANAL, ARAB-ISRAELI CONFLICT, APARTHEID, AND CHILEAN HUMAN RIGHTS FIGURED PROMINENTLY AMONG THESE. DESPITE THESE DIVISIVE THEMES MOST DELEGATES (INCLUDING MEXICAN AND OUR OWN) AGREED THAT CONFERENCE ACHIEVED FUNDAMENTAL CONSENSUS OF BROAD AGENDA OF WOMEN'S CONCERNS, AND ITS FIVE-YEAR PLAN OF ACTION LAID SATISFACTORY GROUNDWORK FOR FURTHER COOPERATION IN THESE AREAS. IN DOMESTIC TERMS FOR MEXICO, CONFERENCE PROVED LESS NOISY AND CERTAINLY LESS VIOLENT THAN SOME HERE HAD FEARED.

3. FOREIGN VISITORS - NO END IN SIGHT

EVEN WCIWY (WHICH BROUGHT ONE HEAD OF STATE, SRI LANKA'S SIRIMAVO BANDARANAIKE, AND THE WIVES OF SEVERAL MORE) FAILED TO SATISFY GOM LUST FOR THE VISITING VIPS. DURING JUNE ROMANIAN PRESIDENT CEAUSESCU AND SWEDISH PRIME MINISTER OLOF PALME BOTH MADE OFFICIAL 4 DAY VISITS. THE FORMER PRODUCED ELEVEN DISCRETE AGREEMENTS AND A GREAT DEAL OF RHETORIC. THE LATTER PRODUCED MOSTLY RHETORIC. AT MONTHS END JAMAICAN PRIME MINISTER MANLEY ARRIVED ON A 4 DAY VISIT. JULY WILL PROVIDE A RESPITE WHEN ECHEVERRIA WILL RETURN VISITS TO TANZANIA, SENEGAL, AND IRAN, AND BREAK NEW GROUND IN VISITING GUYANA, ALGERIA, EGYPT, AND INDIA. (ITINERARY IS APPARENTLY STILL LESS THAN FIRM.)

4. ECHEVERRIA - UN SECRETARY GENERAL?

WHAT HAD BEEN LONG BELIEVED BECAME VIRTUALLY OFFICIAL IN EARLY JUNE - PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA IS CAMPAIGNING TO REPLACE KURT WALDHEIM AS SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE U.N. NEWS BROKE HERE WHEN MEXICAN PAPERS HEADLINED AN AP STORY FROM WASHINGTON

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TON TO THIS EFFECT. MEXICAN PRESS HAS GIVEN CONTINUING ATTENTION TO THE SUBJECT, ARGUING THAT ECHEVERRIA WOULD BE IDEAL CHOICE, GIVE CERDS SPONSORSHIP AND LATIN AMERICA NEVER HAVING HAD A UN SEC GEN. FRENETIC ACTIVITY IN INTERNATIONAL REALM (SEE ABOVE ITEM) ECHEVERRIA PROBABLY SEES AS SUPPORTIVE OF THIS AMBITION; CERTAINLY ALGERIAN, EGYPTIAN, IRANIAN AND INDIAN BACKING (IF HE COULD GET IT) WOULD GO A LONG WAY.

5. UNAM STRIKE SETTLED.

A TEACHERS' STRIKE WHICH BEGAN ON THE EVE OF WOMEN'S CONFERENCE BRIEFLY THREATENED TO MAKE GOM NIGHTMARES OF VIOLENCE (A LA TLATELOLEO) COME TRUE. BUT TEACHERS UNION WAS UNABLE TO SHUT UNIVERSITY DOWN COMPLETELY, AND MANY OTHER TEACHERS GROUPS PUBLICLY DISASSOCIATED THEMSELVES FROM THE STRIKE. ALSO, ISSUES REMAINED CONFINED TO ACADEMIC QUESTIONS AND DID NOT SPILL OVER INTO CONFRONTATION WITH GOM. ON JUNE 24 AGREEMENT RATHER MORE FAVORABLE TO UNIVERSITY AUTHORITIES THAN TO TEACHERS WAS REACHED.

6. PRESIDENTIAL SUCCESSION ACTIVITY DORMANT

OBEDIENT TO PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA'S BLUNT DECLARATION IN MAY THAT PRESIDENTIAL POLITICKING SHOULD STOP SO THE WORK OF HIS ADMINISTRATION COULD CONTINUE, VISIBLE SUCCESSION RELATED ACTIVITY HAS VIRTUALLY CEASED. PRI (RULING PARTY) LEADERS SPENT MOST OF JUNE TRAVELING ABROAD; THOSE WHO STAYED BEHIND WERE INVOLVED IN ELABORATION OF A MAMMOTH "BASIC PLAN" FOR THE NEXT ADMINISTRATION, TO BE UNVEILED ALONG WITH THE OFFICIAL CANDIDATE IN OCT-NOV. LATE IN JUNE GOM ANNOUNCED PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA WOULD TRAVEL TO SEVERAL AFRICAN COUNTRIES, PLUS IRAN AND INDIA, THUS REVERSING A DECLARATION ECHEVERRIA MADE IN LATE 1974 THAT HE WOULD NOT TRAVEL ABROAD IN 1975. WE INTERPRET ABOVE FACTORS TO MEAN ECHEVERRIA IS RELAXED ABOUT THE SUCCESSION AND CONFIDENT IT IS UNDER HIS CONTROL. IT MAY MEAN DECISION IS ALREADY MADE. SECRETARY OF GOVERNMENT MOYA PALENCIA REMAINS MOST LIKELY BET BUT PRESIDENCY SECRETARY HUGO CERVANTES DEL RIO PERSISTS AS POSSIBLE CHOICE BECAUSE:

- 1) HE IS ONLY MOYA RIVAL WITH BROAD-BASED POLITICAL
 - 2) ECHEVERRIA COULD DECIDE NEXT PRESIDENT OUGHT TO COME FROM POSITION OTHER THAN SECRETARY OF
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GOVERNMENT, AND

- 3) CERVANTES' RECENT PUBLIC VISIBILITY HAS FOSTERED A BELIEF THAT ECHEVERRIA IS ATTEMPTING TO BUILD PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR HIM.

ALL THREE REASONS ARE PLAUSIBLE BUT OFFSET BY A) MOYA'S GREATER POLITICAL SUPPORT (WE JUDGE) B) MARGINALITY OF CONSIDERATION (2) ABOVE TO BASIC CRITERION FOR SELECTION - WHICH IS TO CHOOSE HE WHO CAN BEST PERSERVE RULING COALITION UNIT, AND C) PUBLIC SUPPORT (AS DISTINCT FROM SUPPORT OF KEY POLITICAL SECTORS) CAN BE EASILY PRODUCED BETWEEN ANNOUNCEMENT OF CANDIDATE IN OCTOBER-NOVEMBER AND ELECTIONS JULY 1976.

7. PAN - INTERNAL SPLIT WIDENS

THE DIVISION WITHIN THE OPPOSITION PARTY OF NATIONAL ACTIN
(PAN) BECAME MORE VISIBLE AND SERIOUS IN JUNE. PAN PRESIDENT
EFRAIN GONZALEZ HAS REACTED TO PROTESTS AGAINST VARIOUS
OF HIS DECISIONS WITH THREATS OF EXPLUSION, CRISPUJK
WHICH MAY BE MOST SERIOUS FACED BY PARTY IN ITS 36 YEAR
HISTORY, IRONICALLY COMES WHEN PAN WAS BECOMING SERIOUS
CONTENDER TO PRI IN FEDERAL DISTRICT AND OTHER URBAN AREAS.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLITICAL SUMMARIES, JUNE
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 03 JUL 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975MEXICO05860
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750228-0657
From: MEXICO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750788/aaaadaqi.tel
Line Count: 177
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 10 SEP 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <10 SEP 2003 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <11 SEP 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MONTHLY POLITICAL HIGHLIGHTS - JUNE 1975
TAGS: PFOR, PINT, MX
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006